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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 000104

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/FO, NEA/ARP, NEA/NGA, IO/UNP, PRM/ANE  
GENEVA FOR STONECIPHER  
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TAGS: [PREF](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [IZ](#) [KU](#) [ICRC](#)

SUBJECT: (C) HUMANITARIAN PLANNING ON IRAQ

REF: A. 02 STATE 264634

[1](#)B. 02 KUWAIT 5137

[1](#)C. 02 KUWAIT 5133

[1](#)D. 02 KUWAIT 5063

[1](#)E. 02 KUWAIT 4961

[1](#)F. 02 KUWAIT 4899

[1](#)G. 02 KUWAIT 4379

[1](#)H. (REFS B-G NODIS SPARROW

Classified By: (U) AMBASSADOR RICHARD H. JONES; REASON 1.5 (D)

[1](#)1. (C) INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: This message summarizes the current state of planning in Kuwait for humanitarian aspects of Iraq contingency. Most of this information has been reported previously in greater detail. Coordination is ongoing among the Embassy, US military, GOK, Kuwait Red Crescent (KRCS), ICRC, and UNHCR. The GOK is adamant that no Iraqi Displaced Civilians (DCs) will be allowed to cross the border, but it intends to provide and facilitate assistance inside Iraq. The GOK is keen to participate in the Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC); it is exploring alternatives after its initial offer to have KRCS host and direct the HOC ran afoul of the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement's principle of neutrality. Elements of a large DART team will begin arriving in Kuwait around January 15. END INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) The Embassy and the Civil Affairs branch (C-9) of Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) have participated in extensive coordination meetings with the GOK, generally chaired by MFA with the participation of Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior as well as KRCS. The USG inter-agency Humanitarian Planning Team (HPT) visited here in December. Elements of a large DART team will begin arriving in Kuwait around January 15; their focus will be more on reconstruction than immediate humanitarian assistance.

[1](#)3. (C) The GOK is adamantly opposed to allowing Iraqi DCs to enter Kuwait, but it is willing to provide assistance to them on the Iraqi side of the border, and to facilitate efforts of IOs and NGOs to provide similar assistance. It does not want to play any role in providing security for DCs, for fear that emotions between Kuwaitis and Iraqis still run high and could lead to violent incidents. (NOTE: The constitution prohibits Kuwaiti military forces from crossing the border, and it would be a violation of the Demilitarized Zone for Kuwaiti military to approach within 5 kms. of the Iraqi border. UNIKOM, the UN mission that monitors the DMZ, would probably not be there to record any such violation, however, as its plan calls for it to withdraw completely in the event of conflict. END NOTE.) The GOK considers it politically acceptable for KRCS personnel to cross the border (either under ICRC auspices or in their own right) without exposing Kuwait to charges of occupying Iraqi territory, because such movement would be under cover of "friendly forces."

[1](#)4. (C) The GOK is keen to participate actively in the Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC) which CFLCC intends to establish in Kuwait. The GOK initially offered to have KRCS host and direct the HOC, but deferred to ICRC protests that this would violate the principle of neutrality on which the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement depends in order to be able to operate on both sides during a conflict. At this writing, the GOK is exploring alternatives by which it can play an active role in the HOC.

[1](#)5. ICRC is within "a few days" of having the logistical capacity and materiel sufficient to provide aid to up to 27,000 DCs in an initial phase (out of a total of 100,000 throughout Iraq), but it does not yet have the additional personnel who would be needed. ICRC says two major logistical centers are being built up in Iran, whose Red Crescent Society has "impressive capabilities."

[1](#)6. (C) UNHCR has made it clear that it is willing to assist any DCs stranded near the border and unable to cross it (i.e. not yet technically refugees, and therefore technically not under UNHCR's mandate). The regional director in Riyadh is handling Iraq contingency planning. The small office in Kuwait is being reinforced with an Emergency Coordinator (already here) and additional staff. Logistics bases are in

Aqaba, Jordan and Iskenderun, Turkey.

17. (C) IOM and Mercy Corps are visiting Kuwait now, and IOM has already announced its intention to open an office here. We anticipate that other IOs and NGOs may decide to use Kuwait as a base of operations for Iraq, once the HOC is established.

18. (C) COMMENT: The state of coordination regarding humanitarian contingency planning is quite advanced compared to the run-up to Desert Storm. The Embassy will continue to press to maintain and accelerate this coordination in the weeks ahead.  
JONES